

**Subject:** Chat with Catalina Saldaña

**From:** "Catalina Saldaña" <cat.salda@gmail.com>

**To:** barriticus@gmail.com

**Catalina:** my office mate showed up!!

**me:** !!!

**Catalina:** she gave me pills

**me:** I also got more pills

**me:** I feel very close to you right now

**Catalina:** yes me too

**Catalina:** she also showed up wearing massive amounts of makeup

**me:** I see. What does that signify?

**Catalina:** kinda scary but i got pills

**Catalina:** nothing, just that shes crazy

**me:** Very well.

**Catalina:** i have always tried to hide my craziness because i think i can get away with more, but she just doesn't give a fuck

**Catalina:** i kind of admire that

**Catalina:** she just got in

**me:** she's a hero

**Catalina:** maybe it would be easier not to give a fuck if i were a trust fund baby like she is. All she has to do is hold a job

**Catalina:** any job

**me:** what's the point of having a trust fund if you have to hold a job, too?

**Catalina:** i dont know, her parents are crazy

**Catalina:** i guess they want her to do something

**me:** that's very admirable, I guess

**me:** when my uncle dies of lung cancer, I'll be a gentleman by way of inherited oil residuals

**me:** only \$500 a month, really

**me:** but I still count that as being a gentleman

**me:** I'll start smoking a pipe, for instance

**Catalina:** nice

**Catalina:** crack pipe?

**Catalina:** you already do that?

**Catalina:** you already do that

**Catalina:** no question mark

**Catalina:** ugh

**Catalina:** old people are so annoying sometimes

**me:** no they're not

**Catalina:** ok

**me:** on the other hand

**Catalina:** yes you know old people best

**me:** I haven't dealt with any old people in a long time

**Catalina:** your roommate is old

**Catalina:** i deal with olds on a daily basis

**Catalina:** and the old i was referring to now is carl, hes always grumpy

**me:** what are you guys always fighting about?

**me:** big things or little inconsequential things?

**Catalina:** we're not fighting

**Catalina:** he just calls to complain about shit

**Catalina:** nothing that has to do with me

**Catalina:** its annoying

**me:** I see

**Catalina:** he has a bad day every day and i can't ever get mad at him for anything because hes always having a bad day

**Catalina:** i mean i do but he'll say shit like "you know i've had a difficult day why would you bring this up now?"

**Catalina:** but EVERY day of his life is a difficult day

**me:** cute

**Catalina:** sorry, i had to vent

**me:** what's so difficult about them?

**Catalina:** his brain

**Catalina:** he is difficult

**Catalina:** he makes everything difficult for himself

**Catalina:** are you working on something now?

**me:** maybe you should advise him not to do that

**me:** yeah, writing up this conversation I had with Charles Johnson regarding certain aspects of the internet and cognitive development of those who grew up with it, other related issues, for Vanity Fair

**Catalina:** whats different about their cognitive development?

**me:** well, it's similar to what happened in classical Greece with the advent of literacy

**me:** which had an impact on the minds of those who adapted it, allowing for enhanced critical thinking and the development of abstract systems, which didn't seem to exist in pre-literate oral cultures

**Catalina:** how do you see this now? examples please

**me:** sorry, was talking to landlord, back now

**me:** examples

**me:** we have Homer, for instance, and other oral products of Greek culture, and we see that they are all narrative-based and make no reference to ethics

**Catalina:** no i mean with the internet

**me:** ah

**me:** my theory is that

2 of 4 **me:** the rise of the internet is having a similar positive effect

**me:** it exists as a sort of record of our cultural products

**me:** and makes it easier, for instance, to fact check, to find contradictions in the work of those who might otherwise not be detected as being full of shit

**me:** the ability to search through a great portion of our cultural products, for instance

**me:** actually, I'll just send you the epilogue to my book, which explains this all

**Catalina:** ok

**me:** suffice to say that Greek sophists operating withing an orality-based exchange could get away with quite a bit of nonsense that became less easy to get away with when things started getting written down

**me:** and I think we see a similar dynamic with pre-internet written products vs. post-internet written products, with the latter allowing for far better detection of falsities

**Catalina:** yeah, although i still think most people dont care

**Catalina:** crack baby thing

**Catalina:** was false

**Catalina:** most people i know still believe that shit

**Catalina:** maybe i just know a bunch of idiots

**me:** yeah, but people who rely on certain aspects of the internet for knowledge are now used to being able to verify or falsify any assertion in a matter of seconds

**me:** in a manner that would have been impossible 15 years ago

**me:** this isn't to say that just having access to the internet makes someone more intellectually rigorous, but rather than it makes it possible for those who are generally reasonable to access information in a way that their predecessors could not

**Catalina:** agreed

**me:** meanwhile

**me:** the new abundance of oral-visual information

**me:** may result in a large "underclass" of people who might have been reading more decades ago but will today consume this non-text info to the detriment of their critical thinking abilities

**me:** resulting in a sort of "new orality" which will have negative effects on the citizenry as a whole, insomuch as that oral-minded people are more easily manipulated

**me:** the chapter I sent you is the unedited version, has a few typos and some of the more expository portions needed to be rewritten, but it should give you a sense of the theory anyhow

**me:** fuck, I've got to make some serious revisions to this epilogue

**me:** I think I was nodding off when I wrote it

**Catalina:** hey im back on

**Catalina:** internet was out for a while

**me:** hey hey hey

**me:** anywho

**me:** I'll send you a different version of that chapter I sent you earlier when I'm done tweaking it

3 of 4 **me:** I was half-conscious while writing it, I seem to recall, and many parts are unclear 5/31/26, 12:01 PM

**Catalina:** ok

**me:** what are you doing now, if anything?

**Catalina:** im actually doing work

**Catalina:** called and scheduled some patients

**Catalina:** now i have to enter some MRI information in a database

**me:** carry on then

**Catalina:** thanks

**Catalina:** im leaving now

**Catalina:** later

**me:** adios